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Rhode Island Conservation Planning Workbook

Conservation on Your Land



Helping People Help the Land

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What is a Conservation Plan?

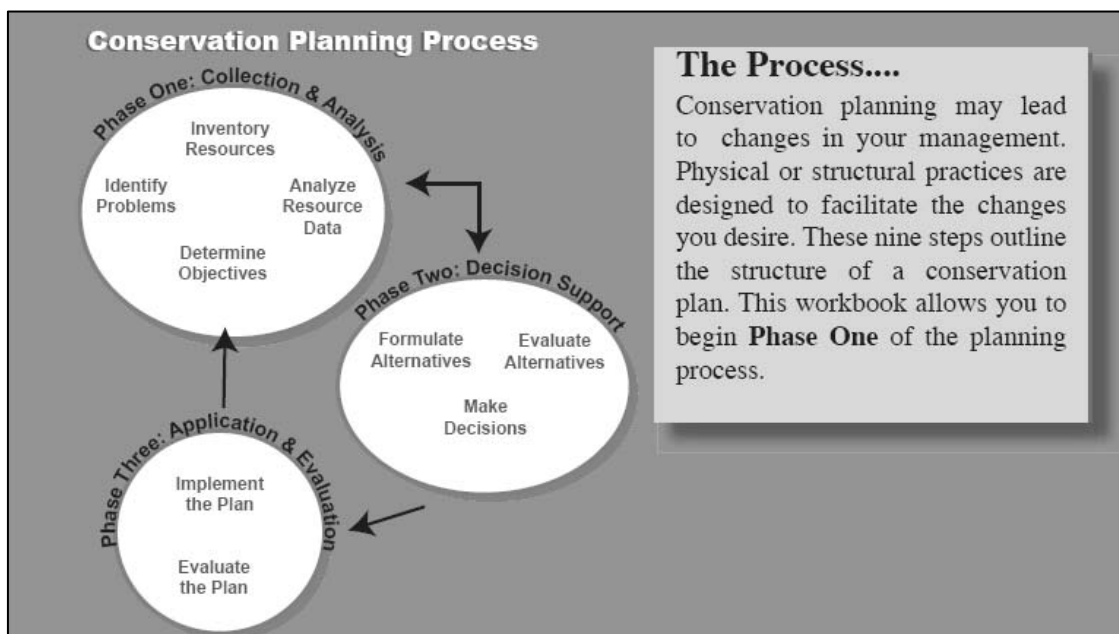
A Conservation Plan is a tool that helps manage your lands profitably while protecting your natural resources. Soil erosion, water quality, and waste management are just a few of the resource concerns that could be addressed with a plan. The completed conservation plan will describe each of the conservation practices you select to manage your natural resources. The choice to develop or not develop a conservation plan is yours - it is a voluntary process. You make the decisions. You implement the plan.

Conservation planners provide the technical assistance needed to develop and implement your plan. Their help is free. Creating a plan does not provide public access to your property. You control all rights of entry and use. All of the information developed by you belongs to you.

A Conservation Plan consists of nine steps and is relatively complex. This workbook does not result in a complete plan; however, it assists you with the preliminary self-assessment and fact gathering needed for a plan. The topics covered in this workbook include:

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After completing this preliminary self-assessment, contact your local United States Department of Agriculture Service Center to be put in contact with a conservation planner. The conservation planner will assist you, or you may employ a qualified private consultant, to complete a plan.



What are the Benefits of a Conservation Plan?

- Saves money as your land becomes more productive.
- Ensures better natural resource quality for you, your animals, and your neighbors.
- Increases your property value.
- Enhances open space and wildlife habitat.
- Improves animal health.
- Prevents off-farm impacts.
- Contributes to plant health and vigor.
- Makes your land more attractive and promotes good neighbor relations.
- Promotes health and safety for your family

Information about Your Land

Name of Landowner (s): _____

Name/ Business Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Site Location: _____

Watershed: _____

Describe your land's soils: (sandy, wet, steep, rocky, etc...) _____

Describe any known archaeological, historical or cultural features present on your land: _____

Do you have existing NRCS or FSA maps with fields marked? _____ (If yes, please attach)

Setting Your Objectives

The best place to start planning is to set objectives. Objectives will keep you focused and provide you with a measurement tool to determine progress. Set realistic objectives that can be reached with small achievable steps. State clearly what you want to happen on your land and where you want to be within a selected time frame. Clear objectives will help the conservation planner develop a plan that is right for you.

Natural Resource Objective

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

Production & Economic Objectives

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

Quality of Life Objective

Short Term: _____

Long Term: _____

What do you want your land to look like in five years?

Map of Your Land

Describe each of your fields in the chart below

Field or Land Unit	Acres	Land Use [*]	Field Characteristics ^{**}

^{*}Examples of land use: crop, homestead, forest, etc.

^{**}Examples of Field Characteristics: production or operation constraints, soil type

Draw (or attach) a general map of the land you wish to include in your conservation plan.

N
↑

Resource Concerns & Problems

Conservation planning provides the opportunity to address a broad reach of resource concerns. Briefly describe your Soil, Water, Air, Plant, Animal and Human resource concerns. (SWAPA+H)

Soil: (e.g. erosion, condition, contaminants) _____

Water: (e.g. quantity, quality) _____

Air Quality: (e.g. dust, chemical drift, odors) _____

Plant: (e.g. native habitats, pasture conditions, invasive species, plant health) _____

Animal: (e.g. wildlife habitat, livestock health) _____

Human Considerations: (e.g. land ownership, economics, available labor, personal objectives) _____

Additional Notes & Concerns

Cropping

Crops grown in a typical year	Average Yield/Units	Total Acres	Plant Date	Harvest Date

Crop Rotation Description

Field #	Acres	Typical Cropping Sequence

Tillage Description

Tillage or other operation	Implement	Crop	Date

Cropping (continued)

Most recent soil test date: _____
(Please bring most recent soil test results to your planning meeting.)

Fertilizers and Soil Amendments

Field(s)	Fertilizer or Amendment	Rate	Application Method	Date	Acres

Are you interested in keeping fertilizer and soil amendment records? _____

Integrated Pest Management Practices

Field #	Acres	Integrated Pest Management Practice(s)

Are you keeping pesticide records? _____

Are you certified organic? _____

Do you use organic farming techniques? _____

Irrigation

List your irrigation source(s) (e.g., well, pond, town) _____

What is your irrigation method(s) (e.g., drip, sprinkler, other)? _____

Sprinkler Irrigation Systems

Field Number							
Field Size (acres)							
Typical Crop							
Length of laterals (feet)							
Distance between laterals or move distance (feet)							
Sets per field (number)							
Laterals per set (number)							
Sprinklers per set (number)							
Sprinkler flow rate (gpm)							
Flow rate to each set (gpm)							
Time to irrigate each set (hours)							
Interval between irrigation (days)							

Pump Information

Booster Pump: Yes or No

HP: _____

Deep Well: Yes or No

Flow Rate (cfs or gpm): _____

What is your method of scheduling irrigation? (e.g., rain gauge, tensiometer, crop stress, etc...) _____

Irrigation (Continued)

Micro-Irrigation or Drip Irrigation System

Field Number							
Field Size (acres)							
Typical Crop							
Length of laterals (feet)							
Laterals per row (number)							
Distance between laterals (feet)							
Sets per field (number)							
Laterals per set (number)							
Emitter flow rate (gpm)							
Flow rate to each set (gpm)							
Time to irrigate each set (hours)							
Interval between irrigation (days)							

Pump Information

Booster Pump: Yes or No

HP:

Deep Well: Yes or No

Flow Rate (cfs or gpm):

What is your method of scheduling irrigation? (e.g., rain gauge, tensiometer, crop stress, etc...) _____

(when and how long)

Livestock

Livestock Types and Breeds (e.g., dairy, beef, horse)	Number	Average Weight	Days Held Annually (No.)

Describe your livestock management (e.g., confined feeding, forage and roughages used, season of use, grazing system): _____

Describe your manure storage: _____

Describe your livestock watering system: _____

Describe how you apply manure to fields or dispose of manure (e.g., compost, sell) _____

How many acres do you pasture? _____

Does your livestock have direct access to streams, ponds or other water bodies? _____

Do you have invasive or noxious weeds? _____ If yes, how do you deal with them? (e.g. spraying, grazing, cutting) _____

Forest

What is your project area? _____

What is your forestry interest? (wildlife habitat, recreation, timber production, cordwood, forest stand improvement) _____

Do you currently have a Forest Management or Stewardship Plan? Y or N

What are the dominant tree types? _____

Do you propose tree planting? If so, what kind? _____

Are there other wildlife conservation practices you are considering? _____

Have there been previous forestry management activities? (selective harvesting, thinning, brush removal, wildlife clearings) _____

Water and Wetlands

Do you have wetlands, streams, or ponds? Yes ____ No ____ How Many? _____

If yes, what is the primary purpose? (Wildlife, irrigation, etc.) _____

List streams or ditches running through or adjacent to your land: _____

Describe any flooding or drainage concerns you may have: _____

Describe wetland areas: _____

Do you have buffers adjacent to the water bodies? _____ Width? _____



Wildlife

What are your wildlife objectives? _____

What type(s) of habitat(s) are you interested in restoring, enhancing, or creating?

<input type="checkbox"/> Freshwater Wetland Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Wetland
<input type="checkbox"/> Riparian Wetland Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Wetland
<input type="checkbox"/> Stream Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Salt Marsh
<input type="checkbox"/> Vernal Pool	<input type="checkbox"/> Brackish Marsh
<input type="checkbox"/> Forested Wetland	<input type="checkbox"/> Freshwater Tidal Marsh
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergent Wetland	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Lagoon
<input type="checkbox"/> Riparian & Coastal Upland Buffer	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfragmented Forestland
<input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous Fish Passage	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Habitat Type(s):
<input type="checkbox"/> Upland-Early Successional Wildlife Habitat	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Warm Season Grassland	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Seeding/Sapling Forest	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Field Border	_____

Briefly describe currently or previous wildlife management activities _____

Total Acres of Property _____ Total Restoration Area (if known) _____

Total Habitat Area that will benefit from restoration (if known): _____
(Include any contiguous habitat area adjacent to restoration site that will benefit from project-this land use area should be actively or passively managed as wildlife habitat)

Watershed: _____

Is any portion of the proposed project location under a temporary or long-term conservation easement? (i.e., **RIDEM Forest Legacy Program, Farm Forest and Open Space Program, or Conservation Deed Restriction**, etc.)? If so, does the easement stipulate any particular land management goals or objectives? _____

Property Management Goals: _____

Has there been any previous wildlife assessments location? If so, explain and submit copy with your application materials: (plant, animals, hydrology, etc.) _____

Assistance Information

List contracts, easements, and/or agreements entered into for technical or financial assistance, which restrict land management, practices: _____

List conservation practices you have applied: _____

List conservation practices you have considered applying: _____

List funding programs in which you are interested, if known: _____

Are the development rights sold? _____ If not, are you interested? _____

Additional questions, information
